

Oral Questions

entering. Why is special treatment given to these particular people?

● (1452)

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): It is not a question of particular treatment given to anyone. The question is really one of developing evidence in examining complaints that have come in. What the hon. member is suggesting is that every time a complaint comes in concerning the operations or practices of the force, I should send the complaint to the provincial attorney general. The fact of the matter is that we have set up a royal commission inquiry which will examine the complaints to obtain factual evidence as to whether or not these complaints are substantiated.

Mr. Brewin: To see whether you can cover up.

Mr. Fox: I really do not see how, by referring the complaint to a royal commission of inquiry, which is chaired by a judge of the Supreme Court of Alberta, I can be accused of covering up.

Mr. Broadbent: Because Quebec had the information, that is why.

Mr. Fox: I would hope that the royal commission of inquiry will examine, as a priority matter, all the complaints, which may include allegations of illegal activities. If in the course of the examination of these complaints they come up with hard evidence that there has been a commission of an illegality, I assume that the royal commission of inquiry will advise me of the evidence they have come up with and will recommend that that evidence be brought to the attention of the relevant attorney general of the province. I really do not see why, if that is the attitude of the members of the NDP, they were pressing to such an extent to have the royal commission of inquiry. What they are saying is that they want a royal commission of inquiry but they do not want it to do anything.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Brewin: Mr. Speaker, I would again like to ask the Solicitor General whether he is now claiming there is any doubt whatever that there was an illegal break in? Did it take months for the royal commission to discover that fact?

Mr. Fox: I hope, Mr. Speaker, that it can be handled quite expeditiously by the royal commission—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fox: —along with the other complaints that have been made. Once again, Mr. Speaker, the proof is in the pudding. We have referred all these complaints to the attention of the royal commission of inquiry and we expect them to examine them in an impartial light and to come to relevant conclusions.

[Mr. Brewin.]

PROPOSED CONFERENCE WITH PROVINCES TO ESTABLISH
WORKING RELATIONSHIP PENDING REPORTS OF POLICE
INQUIRIES

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member for Greenwood is aware, as we all are in the House except for the Solicitor General, that the terms of reference of the McDonald Commission are not adequate to do the job for which it was set up. In view of the growing tensions that are becoming so obvious between federal justice authorities and provinces, particularly the provinces of Quebec and Alberta, does the Solicitor General have plans to meet with his provincial counterparts as soon as possible in order to come to some interim working relationship until such time as the various commissions of inquiry are able to complete their work, which may take some months, and in order to facilitate the position of the police who are being caught in the middle of this important situation?

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): I met the attorneys general of all provinces, along with the Attorney General of Canada, during the month of June. I believe the situation as described by the hon. member is not quite exact.

While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. member to a point of misinformation which was contained in his speech last night when he once again, in an ominous fashion, tried to indicate that there was some plot between the government and the House and the fact—

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

MEASURES TO ASSURE CO-OPERATION BETWEEN VARIOUS
POLICE FORCES

Mr. Elmer M. MacKay (Central Nova): Mr. Speaker, if I have given, advertently or inadvertently, misinformation in the House, certainly my record in the House is far below that of the Solicitor General.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. MacKay: The record is available for all to see. I want to ask the Solicitor General, in order to facilitate and co-ordinate proper and amiable relationships between various police forces in this country, what new initiatives does the Solicitor General have in mind following, or in addition to, the meetings held from time to time of the criminal intelligence service of Canada? Does he have any new initiatives to meet what is obviously an urgent situation?

Hon. Francis Fox (Solicitor General): I say that in spite of the misinformation, the hon. member does not have the courage to stand up and ask the question which would permit us to clear it up. There are a number of initiatives that have been taken by the government in connection with the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police in order to ensure greater co-ordination among the police forces of this country. So far as